41 ~~41~~. (Amended) A semiconductor processing method of forming a conductive transistor gate over a substrate comprising the steps of:

B1

forming a conductive gate over a gate dielectric layer on a substrate, the gate having sidewalls and an interface with the gate dielectric layer;

forming sidewall spacers over the gate's sidewalls, the sidewall spacers joining with the gate dielectric layer; and

after forming the sidewall spacers, exposing the substrate to oxidizing conditions effective to channel oxidants through the gate dielectric layer and underneath the sidewall spacers joined therewith wherein only [to oxidize at least] a portion of the gate at the interface with the gate dielectric layer is oxidized.

B2

45 ~~45~~. (Amended) A semiconductor processing method of forming a conductive gate comprising:

sub. C2

forming a conductive gate structure on a first layer which is disposed on a substrate, the gate structure having sidewalls and an interface with the first layer;

forming sidewall spacers over [a] the conductive gate's sidewalls sufficiently to cover all conductive material comprising [said] the sidewalls; and

after forming the sidewall spacers, conducting an oxidizing step by channeling oxidants through [a] the first layer [which underlies the gate and the sidewall spacers, and] which is

19

B

outwardly exposed laterally proximate the sidewall spacers wherein the sidewall spacers provide that only a portion of the gate at the interface with the first layer is oxidized.

50. (Amended) A semiconductor processing method of forming a conductive transistor gate over a substrate comprising[the steps of]:

forming a dielectric layer on a substrate;

forming a conductive gate over [a gate] the dielectric layer [on a substrate], the gate having sidewalls defining a lateral dimension of the gate [disposed over the dielectric layer, the dielectric layer extending laterally outward of the sidewalls];

forming non-oxide material over the gate and the dielectric layer adjacent the gate;

anisotropically etching the non-oxide material to form non-oxide spacers over the sidewalls, the spacers joining with the gate dielectric layer adjacent the gate; and

after [anisotropically etching the non-oxide material to form] forming the spacers, exposing the substrate to oxidizing conditions effective to oxidize [at least a] only that portion of the gate proximate the spacers and the dielectric layer.

52 ~~12~~ ~~52~~. (Amended) A semiconductor processing method of forming a conductive gate comprising [the steps of]:

forming a [patterned] gate structure atop a substrate having a dielectric [surface] layer thereon, at least a portion of the gate structure being conductive, the conductive portion comprising:

a polysilicon layer,

an overlying metal, and

a reaction barrier layer interposed between the polysilicon and the overlying metal;

covering a top and sidewalls of the gate structure with an oxidation resistant material, said covering comprising:

[depositing] a first barrier material [over the gate], and

[depositing] a second barrier material disposed over the first barrier material, [and]

anisotropically etching the [first and second barrier] oxidation resistant material[s] to a degree sufficient to leave the oxidation [barriers on] laterally adjacent to and resistant material covering all of the sidewalls of the gate structure while exposing the dielectric layer adjacent the gate structure; and

exposing the substrate to oxidation conditions effective to oxidize [at least] a portion of the gate structure laterally adjacent the covered sidewalls and adjacent the dielectric [surface] layer.